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DANEBURY:

OR

The Power of Friendſhip,

A TALE.

With TWO ODES.

By a YOUNG LADY.

In all the dewy Landſcapes of the Spring,
In the bright Eye of Heſper or the Morn,
In Nature's faireſt Forms is Ought ſo fair
As virtuous Friendſhip?

AKENSIDE's *Pleaſures of Imagination.*

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To * * * * * * * *

THE filial affection that ever glows in my heart, will not admit of a doubt to whom this little piece ſhould be inſcribed. By a revered and much-lov'd Father's command it ventures into the world, and his approving ſmile is the higheſt fame to which its writer aſpires. The meaneſt flower may perhaps yield ſome pleaſure to the hand that cultivated it. Accept then this trifle, my ever dear and honoured Sir, as a teſtimony of gratitude from her, who can never be enough thankful to Heaven for the happineſs of being able to ſubſcribe herſelf

Your DAUGHTER,

* * * * * *.

ADVERTISEMENT.

DANEBURY HILL is an ancient camp in the vicinity of Stockbridge, in Hampſhire, near which, according to tradition, a battle was fought between the Danes and the Weſt Saxons, in which the former were defeated; from whence the hill derives its name.

DANEBURY;

IN ancient times e'er peace with lenient ſmile
Had ſhed her bleſſings o'er Britannia's iſle:
When our bold fathers felt the patriot flame
Nerve the ſtrong arm and urge them on to fame.
Unſkill'd, Deceit, in all thy ſubtile arts,
A rude Sincerity inform'd their hearts:
Meek-ey'd Simplicity in ruſtic veſt,
And Hoſpitality their ſouls poſſeſt;
Uncultur'd virtues, which too oft decay
Beneath Proſperity's enfeebling ray.

'Twas

'Twas then retir'd on *Brige's peaceful plains,
The friend, the father of the neighb'ring ſwains;
The good old Egbert trod life's humble vale,
Where noiſe, nor care, nor vanity aſſail.
A little farm his every want ſupply'd,
Enough for happineſs, though not for pride:
From Faſhion's ſplendid ſlavery exempt,
Secur'd alike from envy and contempt.
Though ſmall his fortune and his viands plain,
Never did want accoſt his ear in vain.
'Twas his to ſeek the lone obſcure receſs,
Where want and woe the virtuous mind oppreſs,
His pity and his bounty to impart,
And taſte the tranſports of the feeling heart.

Though of his much-lov'd partner long depriv'd,
One lovely copy of her worth ſurviv'd;
Oft as he view'd her beauty-beaming form,
What mix'd ſenſations his fond boſom warm!

Paternal

* Brige—A Roman ſettlement founded by Antonine in Hampſhire.—*See Cambden.*

Paternal tranſport trembling in his eye,
Allay'd by recollection's tender ſigh!

Sweetneſs and ſenſe adorn'd Elfrida's mind,
By Nature's foſtering hand alone refin'd.
His hoary age her filial duty chear'd,
His evening hours enliven'd and endear'd;
Her watchful tenderneſs his care beguil'd,
Supremely happy when her father ſmil'd.

Thus blooms ſome violet in her native vale,
And ſheds untainted fragrance on the gale;
Though unadmir'd ſhe drops her modeſt bloom,
No garden flower excells her ſweet perfume.

Kind Providence ordains the friendly mind
Shall ſeldom fail a kindred ſoul to find:
For friendſhip form'd, Elfrida found that friend,
In Emma's mind unnumber'd graces blend.

Left to the world in youth's unfolding bloom,
Her early tears bedew'd her parents tomb.
That ſhelter Egbert's humble roof ſupplies
Which oft to innocence the world denies:
Ev'n in the dawn of childhood's ſportive years,
Virtue's inſtinctive ſympathy appears;
Fair Friendſhip ſmil'd upon their natal hour,
And ere they knew its name, they felt its power.

If Emma's boſom heav'd a penſive ſigh,
The tear ſtood trembling in Elfrida's eye;
If pleaſure gladden'd her Elfrida's heart,
Still faithful Emma ſhar'd the larger part.
Succeſſive years the tender tie endear'd,
And each to each a dearer ſelf appear'd.
With ſocial ſteps they rang'd the verdant fields,
(For Nature there her ſweeteſt pleaſure yields,)
And oft beneath ſome ſpreading ſhade reclin'd,
Pour'd forth the warm effuſions of the mind:

Uncheck'd

Uncheck'd by fear, the riſing thought impart,
And catch the glowing tranſport of the heart.
Or ſeated with their venerable ſire,
In ſocial converſe round their evening fire;
With fond attention on his words they hung,
And learn'd the lore of wiſdom from his tongue.

Thus peaceful ſtole the hours of life away,
And fancy painted all the future gay.

Oh human bliſs! thou tranſitory flower
That ſprings, and blooms, and withers in an hour!
How vain the ſcenes by flattering hope pourtray'd!
How ſoon Life's faireſt landſcapes ſink in ſhade!
Diſcord and war aſſum'd their baleful reign,
And blood and carnage ſtain'd the neighbouring plain.
On thoſe wide Downs, in living verdure gay,
Where now the fleecy tribes ſecurely ſtray;

Our brave forefathers met their haughty foes,
And arm'd with freedom, dar'd their deathful blows.
The direful ſcene ariſes full to view,
And Fancy peoples all the plain anew!
Loud ſhrieks of woe my frighted ears aſſail,
And Death's deep groan breathes horror through the vale!

Though in the ſcenes, where meek-ey'd Quiet ſtrays,
The venerable Egbert ſpent his days:
Though prone to pity ev'n a foe diſtreſt,
Fair Freedom's fire enlarg'd his glowing breaſt:
The neighbouring Swains his dauntleſs ſteps attend,
Thoſe fields which late they cultur'd to defend.
Abandon'd now, each life-ſuſtaining art,
They lift the ſpear or hurl the miſſile dart.
Yet though above each vulgar care's controul
The patriot paſſion lifts th' expanding ſoul:

Still Nature's, Friendſhip's ties, will oft be felt,
And ev'n the Hero's breaſt to anguiſh melt.

Ah then! what tortures wrung Elfrida's heart!
Imagination only can impart!
When to the fatal field ſhe ſaw him fly,
Bravely reſolv'd to conquer or to die!
She follow'd, filial love abſorb'd each fear,
Check'd each fond tremor, dried each ſelfiſh tear:
Reſolv'd, ſhould Fate a Father's life demand,
To cloſe his ſwimming eyes with duteous hand,
Pour the warm tear, catch the laſt fleeting breath,
And ſhare or ſoften ev'n the pangs of death.

While round the feather'd Deaths promiſcuous flew,
One well aim'd arrow caught Elfrida's view!
Inſtant ſhe mov'd to meet the fatal dart,
Deſign'd to pierce the aged Hero's heart!

Her gentle breaſt receiv'd the fatal wound,
And her pale form ſunk bleeding on the ground!
Youth's lovely bloom forſook her fading face!
And death-like languor crept o'er every grace!

Expreſſive ſilence only can reveal,
Thoſe pangs, a Parent's breaſt alone can feel!
With feeble ſteps, and faltering oft with pain,
Scarce could he bear her from th' enſanguin'd plain;
How ſunk his heart! when firſt appear'd in ſight
The dear domeſtic ſcene of paſt delight!
What pungent ſorrows Emma's boſom knew!
When all the woes imagination drew
Fatally real, met her ſtartled eye,
Shook her whole frame and heav'd the burſting ſigh!

Elfrida's Nurſe, a venerable Dame!
Who almoſt merited a Mother's name,

Soon

Soon came, with anxious haſte the wound to view,
(For nature's healing ſimples well ſhe knew,)
From her full heart burſt forth the honeſt tear,
That ſpoke, more forcibly than words, her fear.
A ſtrong, ſomnific poiſon ting'd the dart,
Which mock'd the ſkilful Matron's utmoſt art.

Sweetly ſerene, the lovely ſufferer ſmil'd!
While loſt in anguiſh, o'er his dying child
The Father hung! too big the ſwelling woe,
The kind relief of friendly tears to know.

Sad Emma ſtrove to hide her grief in vain!
The fruitleſs effort but increas'd the pain.
Elfrida in their ſorrows, loſt her own,
Suppreſs'd each ſigh and ſtifled every groan:
In faltering accents breath'd this laſt requeſt,
" Oh check my Friend the anguiſh of thy breaſt!

" Support

" Support my Father!—cheer his life's decline!
" Fulfil the pleaſing taſk, that once was mine!
" Wipe, wipe that tear—ſince I have ſav'd my Sire
" With gratitude and pleaſure I expire!
" Protect them Heav'n!"—th' unfiniſh'd accents fail'd,
And Sleep, the Harbinger of Death prevail'd.

Egbert withdrew to weep (a poor relief
That while it ſeems to leſſen feeds our grief.)
Emma, alone remain'd to watch her Friend,
And o'er the bed in ſilent anguiſh bend.
While thought on thought diſtract her troubled mind,
Friendſhip a bold, a generous act deſign'd.
While death-like ſleep her Friend's ſenſations drown'd,
She ſuck'd the poiſon from the throbbing wound!
Reſign'd herſelf a victim to the grave,
A life far dearer than her own to ſave.

Nature

Nature ſoon felt the change, no more with pain
The vital flood creeps cold through every vein.
Elfrida wakes,—the death-like ſlumber flies
As night retreats when morning glads the ſkies!

The Father's heart with grateful tranſport glows!
Unknown the ſource from whence that tranſport flows.
But ah! from Emma's cheek the roſes fly,
Joy beam'd a ſmile, while pain awak'd a ſigh:
Too ſoon ſhe felt her ſickening ſpirits fail,
And languor o'er life's active ſprings prevail!
But loth to damp the joy ſhe had inſpir'd,
To the cool air ſhe unobſerv'd retir'd.

Beneath an ancient elm's romantic ſhade,
Where ruſtic toil an humble ſeat had made;
When day departing crimſon'd o'er the ſky,
And glitter'd on the ſtream that wander'd by.

The little friendly groupe would oft repair,
(While breathing woodbines ſweeten'd all the air)
Each blameleſs feeling of their hearts unfold,
Or liſten to the tale of times of old.
Ah happy moments! ever, ever fled!
Now Emma there reclines her dying head!
While o'er her pallid face creeps death's cold dew,
And all the landſcape ſwims before her view.

When near approach'd a venerable Sage,
In all the hoary Majeſty of Age!
Complacent dignity his looks expreſs,
Sedate his ſmile and ſimple was his dreſs.
His ſilver hair, all looſely graceful flow'd,
And on his cheek the roſe of temperance glow'd.
I come, he cries, commiſſion'd from on high!
Heaven views thy virtues with approving eye.

Far from the buſy world's tumultuous ſtrife
The mingled cares and vanities of life,
Retir'd, I live; within my humble cell,
Where Peace, Content, and Contemplation dwell.

When ſable Night her raven-pinions ſpread,
And Sleep had ſhower'd his poppies, o'er my head:
A heavenly viſion warn'd me of thy fate;
And bade me haſten e'er it was too late!
Cultur'd with care, within my little field,
Salubrious herbs their uſeful fragrance yield:
With ſtudious care, I long have ſought to know
What healing virtues from their juices flow;
And warn'd by Heaven, prepar'd within my cell,
Such as have power all poiſon to expel.
Oh take the health-reſtoring draught and live!
With heart-felt pleaſure, I the cordial give.

Amazement, gratitude, o'erwhelm her ſoul!
And motion, ſpeech, and every power controul!
Silence, more eloquent than words, expreſt
The ſtrong emotions of her labouring breaſt.
At length the grateful tranſport forc'd its way,
Such thanks but few can feel, and fewer pay.
In her meek eye, the trembling luſtre ſhone,
And health and beauty reaſſum'd their throne.

The moving tale ſoon reach'd Elfrida's ear,
The moving tale, ſtole many a rapturous tear.
Ah! who can paint the feelings of her mind?
Love, wonder, gratitude, and joy combin'd!
Or the calm bliſs that beam'd in Egbert's eye,
Mild as the radiance of the evening ſky!
From every heart, enraptur'd praiſe aſcends,
And Heaven approving ſmiles on Virtue's friends.

And

And now return'd in peace, the warrior-train
With ſhouts of victory gladden all the plain.
Th' invading Danes before their valour yield,
And preſs, in ſlaughter'd heaps, the enſanguin'd field.

Though Time, with rapid wing, has ſwept away
Forgotten ages, ſince that well-fought day;
Ev'n now, their riſing graves the ſpot diſcloſe,
And Shepherds wonder how the hillocks roſe!
Ev'n now, the precinct of their camp remains,
And DANEBURY HILL the name it ſtill retains.

O'er thoſe romantic mounds, whene'er I ſtray,
And the rude veſtiges of war ſurvey;
Fair gratitude ſhall mark, with ſmile ſerene
The alter'd aſpect of the pleaſing ſcene.
There, where the crouded camp ſpread terror round,
See! waving harveſts cloath the fertile ground!

See! ſmiling villages adorn the plain,
Where deſolation ſtretch'd her iron reign!
How fair the meads, where winding waters flow,
And never-fading verdure ſtill beſtow!
While ſtretch'd beyond, wide cultur'd fields extend
And wood-crown'd hills, thoſe cultur'd fields defend!

But ah! too faint my numbers to diſplay
The various charms that riſe in rich array!
One peaceful ſpot detains my longing ſight,
There, Fancy dwells with ever-fond delight,
Recalls the ſcenes of Childhood to her view,
And lives thoſe pleaſing moments o'er anew.

SPRING,

SPRING,

AN

ODE.

AT length, my hand reſumes the ſilent lyre,
At length attempts to tune the jarring ſtring:
Come, gentle rural muſe, my breaſt inſpire,
To hail the bleſt approach of welcome Spring.
Awake! awake the raptur'd ſtrain!
To ſing the Hill, the Grove, the Plain!
And paint the beauties of the ſcenes I love.

Through

Through my cold breaſt, diffuſe thy vital power,
And wake my languid heart to joy,
With ſmiling pleaſure crown the vernal hour,
And be his praiſe, my bleſt employ,
Who crowns with beauty every field and grove!

Revive thoſe dear ſenſations of delight,
Of late effac'd by ſorrow's ruthleſs hand:
Loſt in the gloom of pale affliction's night,
Are all the fairy ſcenes which fancy plann'd.
Dear happy hours! and are you ever fled?
Are Hope and ſprightly Fancy dead?
And ſhall their power no more this boſom warm?
No more Creation's varied beauties charm?

Nature calls, awake to joy!
See, Creation ſmiles around!
Genial Spring, profuſely throws
Her vivid mantle o'er the ground!

Beauty pencils every vale!
Muſic breathes in every gale!
The artleſs warblings of the woodland choir
A higher ſenſe of bliſs to me impart,
A ſweeter tranſport their wild notes inſpire,
Than all the modulated ſtrains of art.
'Tis Nature ſwells their little throats,
Her bounty tunes their varied notes!

Ye ſportive youths, who range the ſpacious down,
Or ſeek the cloſe receſſes of this grove;
Let ſweet humanity your boſoms move,
And ſpare!—oh ſpare
Theſe ſweet inhabitants of air!
So ſhall their ſongs harmonious flow,
And chear the heart oppreſs'd with woe;
While with their melody, the fields and groves reſound.

And hark! ſad Philomela's ſtrain
Thrills through my ſoul with pleaſing pain!

Dear penſive warbler, thy ſoft ſtrains controul
Each ruder paſſion of my ſoul;
Yields my long bleeding heart a kind relief,
And wakes alone the luxury of grief.

Th' unfolding groves now ſmile in living green,
And verdure ſweetly ſteals o'er every ſcene:
A fainter tinge firſt paints the opening leaves,
Soft as the hours of youth's unfolding bloom;
But ſoon the grove a deeper dye receives,
And ſtronger tints the ſcenes of life aſſume.
Deeper and deeper grows the ſpreading green,
In Summer's glowing beauties dreſt;
Till Autumn mild embrown the ſcene,
And o'er the groves and lawns extend her duſky veſt.

The human Autumn too, will ſoon arrive,
Swift as the rapid wing of time can fly!
When the tir'd mind no new delights revive,
And all the landſcape fades upon the eye.

When

When youth's ſweet tranſports pleaſe no more,
And manhood's buſy ſcenes are o'er:
When the exhauſted paſſions ſink to reſt,
And no unpleaſing calm ſteals o'er the penſive breaſt.

Ah! ſoon theſe ſmiling groves ſhall wear
The melancholy traces of decay!
When the rude hand of Winter drear
Strips of its charms the leafy ſpray.
The falling leaves ſink to their native earth,
And mingle with the clay that gave them birth.
Thus fade the tranſient human race
When Age extends his wintry gloom!
The graceful form, the beauteous face,
Thus ſilent ſink into the tomb.

Soon ſhall the year revolve its conſtant round,
And bid the groves their wonted charms reſume:
Soon, Spring returning paint the ruſſet ground,
And bid the verdure ſpring, the daiſy bloom.

But Life's quick changing ſcenes return no more,
Pale age no more ſhall ſmile in youthful prime;
No ſecond ſpring its faded charms reſtore,
Or heal the ravages of waſting Time.

But ſee! beyond this tranſient ſcene
Eternal Spring its beams diſplay!
The dawn of Heaven's reſplendent day!
All bliſsful, all unclouded, and ſerene!
Then ſhall the forms of human race
Renew'd, with fairer luſtre ſhine,
(If virtue life's ſhort paſſage grace)
All undecaying! all divine!

No ſhade of grief ſhall cloud that bliſsful plain,
But unknown tranſport ever reign!
Pale Winter there reſign his frigid ſway,
And one eternal Spring embloom the Realms of Day.

LIBERTY,

LIBERTY,

AN

ODE.

HOW fair yon landſcape riſes to the eye!
Adorn'd by Cultivation's bounteous hand,
There hills whoſe azure ſummits pierce the ſky,
And all the wide ſtretch'd proſpect round command!

The mingled light and ſhade harmonious blend,
Here towns and ſcattered hamlets grace the ſcene,
There the brown woods their duſky ſhades extend,
And there the meadows ſmile in living green.

Through

Through liquid air what melting muſic floats!
Their mingled ſongs the raptur'd warblers raiſe;
But chief the ſky lark's wildly quivering notes,
Swells the full anthem of her Maker's praiſe.

Oh ſay Britannia! what myſterious charm
Diffuſes beauty o'er thy favour'd Iſle,
Bids genuine tranſport every boſom warm,
And all her lovelieſt ſcenes more lovely ſmile!

'Tis ſacred LIBERTY.—Her magic reign,
To nature's ſcenes can unknown charms impart,
With riper harveſts cloath the fertile plain,
And ſwell with tranſport the expanding heart.

Ah! what avail the beauties nature yields,
If rude oppreſſion's ever graſping hand,
Snatches the product of the fertile fields,
And ſcatters deſolation o'er the land.

Ah!

Ah ! what avail the lovely bloom of ſpring,
The faireſt landſcape of the faireſt clime,
If civil diſcord wave her baleful wing,
And war's dread horrors mark the flight of time !

Such ſcenes th' hiſtoric page unfolds to view,
When Tyranny in ſanguine garb array'd,
O'er Albion's Iſle its baleful influence threw,
Her councils guided, and her ſceptre ſway'd.

The voice of Nature, Friendſhip, heard no more,
Amid the din of univerſal ſtrife,
A brother at a brother's hand implores,
Implores alas in vain !—his fleeting life.

Imagination ſhudders at the thought,
While terror whiſpers—See theſe ſcenes return !
See, with a thouſand latent horrors fraught,
Again the flames of civil diſcord burn !

Avert it heaven! Avert th' impending ſtorm!
Though vengeance hover o'er a guilty land,
When rigorous Juſtice lifts her awful form,
Let Mercy ſtill reſtrain her lingering hand.

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THE END.